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New RM80m Pantai Hospital block by the end of next year

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Women's and children's health should receive a boost with the building of a new hospital block at Pantai Medical Centre for specialist treatment, educational resources and other services.

The new block, standing on 10,999 square metres, will also have 358 beds.

The block, with two wings, eight floors and three basements, will have a total built-up area of 50,000 square metres.

Completion is expected in the last quarter of next year.

One of the new wings will be dedicated to women and children's health and wellbeing.

It will house the maternity and paediatric wards and a resource centre.

The admission, accident and emergency department will also be located in the new block, as will operation theatres, intensive care units and the cardiac centre.

Pantai Holdings Bhd executive chairman Mokhzani Mahathir, who conducted the ground-breaking ceremony for the RM80 million project today, said it would be funded mostly by internal sources.

"We still have reserves so we will keep borrowings to a minimum," he added.

He said most of the costs would be in building the physical structure.

Construction will be carried out by THB-IJM Joint Venture Bhd, a joint venture between Tongkah Holdings Bhd and IJM, specialising in the development and construction of hospitals.

Pantai Medical Centre is one of five hospitals under Pantai Holdings' Hospital Operations division.

Other divisions are Healthcare Support Services and Finance/Investments Management.

Mokhzani said the decision to start work on the new block now was partly spurred by the economic downturn itself.

"In the last 18 months, we have seen an overall reduction of 20 per cent in our corporate clientele, many of whom have opted for the government sector (hospitals).

"But when the economy picks up within two years, that clientele will come back," he said, adding that this was "the best possible time" to begin construction.

"I don't think we will reach pre-1997 clientele figures anytime soon but we will be working towards it," Mokhzani said.

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